

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 94

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SUBJ: PRESIDENT TRAORE'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

PART 3, LABOR

REF: A. BAMAKO 34; B. BAMAKO 83

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT TRAORE URGED POPULAR CONTROL OF MANAGEMENT THROUGH UNION REPRESENTATION AT ALL DECISION-MAKING LEVELS. HE ALSO SET STANDARDS FOR SUCH UNION PARTICIPATION. THE NATIONAL UNION HAS RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BUT MAY HAVE TROUBLE MEETING HIS STANDARDS.

2. PARTICIPATION. IN HIS NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION, MALIAN PRESIDENT MOUSSA TRAORE CALLED FOR A MORE CREATIVE, DYNAMIC LABOR UNION ROLE. HE SAID UNIONS MUST BE REPRESENTED NOT ONLY IN THE COUNCIL'S OF THE RULING MILITARY COMMITTEE AND THE GOVERNMENT, BUT AT ALL LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT. WORKERS MUST BE
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INVOLVED IN THE FORMULATION, EXECUTION AND CONTROL OF

POLICIES WHICH DIRECTLY EFFECT THEM.

3. PITFALLS. THE PRESIDENT OUTLINED SOME OF THE PITFALLS UNION LEADERS SHOULD AVOID. POURING OUT GRIEVANCES TO WIN THE APPLAUSE OF THE WORKERS; EMPIRE-BUILDING; CREATING A PARALLEL ADMINISTRATION; AND BUREAUCRACY. FINALLY, UNION MEMBERS MUST NOT SEEK POSITIONS FOR PERSONAL GAIN AT THE EXPENSE OF WORKERS' INTERESTS.

4. REQUIREMENTS. CITING STANDARDS, PRESIDENT SAID THAT TO REPRESENT WORKERS' VIEWS IN MANAGEMENT DELIBERATIONS, UNIONS MUST BE INTELLECTUALLY, MORALLY AND FINANCIALLY PREPARED. LEADERS MUST CLARIFY DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES WITHIN THE UNION. THEY MUST, AS WELL, BE ABLE TO ANALYZE SCIENTIFICALLY THE COUNTRY-WIDE ECONOMIC PICTURE AND PROPOSE REALISTIC SOLUTIONS; THAT IS, GOALS TAILORED TO THE MEANS AVAILABLE. THE PRESIDENT SWEETENED HIS DISCOURSE WITH CONFIRMATION OF A NATION-WIDE WAGE INCREASE BEGINNING IN JANUARY.

5. UNION RESPONSE. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MALIAN WORKERS (UNTM) IN A DECLARATION APPROVED JANUARY 4 EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE WAGE INCREASE BUT DEMANDED THAT IT BE COUPLED TO A PRICE FREEZE. THE DECLARATION ALSO NOTED UNTM'S HAPPINESS WITH THE CHIEF OF STATE'S DECISION TO GIVE UNIONS A ROLE AT ALL MANAGEMENT LEVELS, AND PROMISED TO FIGHT AGAINST THOSE UNDERMINING THE ECONOMY.

6. COMMENT: IN 1974 THE UNTM VOTED FOR A STRATEGY OF "RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION" RATHER THAN A POLICY OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT. (SINCE THE MAJORITY OF UNION MEMBERS ARE EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OR OF STATE ENTERPRISES, UNIONS DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON ALL MATTERS RELATED TO WORKERS RIGHTS). THE UNION AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE SINCE DEBATED WHAT RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION MEANS. A MONTH AGO, AFTER TALKS WITH UNION MEMBERS IN THE FIRST REGION, THE PRESIDENT SAID IT MEANT SEATS ON GOVERNMENT AND MINISTERIAL COUNCILS, A RIGHT WHICH, HOWEVER, THE UNION ALREADY ENJOYS. SHORTLY, THEREAFTER, THE MINISTER FOR STATE ENTERPRISES GAVE A

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SPEECH CALLING FOR UNION PARTICIPATION AT ALL LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT. THE PRESIDENT APPEARS TO HAVE ACCEPTED THIS PRINCIPLE, BUT THE HIGH STANDARDS HE HAS SET FOR UNION PARTICIPATION MAY DELAY IMPLEMENTATION BECAUSE THE UNTM WILL BE HARD PUT TO FORWARD ENOUGH QUALIFIED CANDIDATES. FURTHER, THE OLD DAYS OF CONFRONTATIONAL POLITICS LEFT THE UNION WITH A POORLY-DEFINED STRUCTURE AND A LEADERSHIP RESISTANT TO A NUTS AND BOLTS APPROACH TO

ORGANIZATION. IN SPITE OF UNTM DEFICIENCIES,
HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT HAS INDICATED HIS DESIRE TO WORK
SERIOUSLY WITH IT AND THE NEXT MOVE IS UP TO THE
UNION.
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